

Johnson on his IPP and to support LB 160.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Remmers, please.

SENATOR REMMERS: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I think that it is obvious that Senator Johnson has never been in charge of a classroom. He has never spent any time working with kids and trying to teach them. Teachers have always been the lowest paid professionals that we have had. Early retirement with full benefit is common in many businesses. Most states are far more generous for the teachers than Nebraska. If early retirement is deserved in any business, it certainly should be for teachers. Senator Johnson may speak for educational excellence, but it is obvious he is antiteachers. How can he say that he is for excellence in education? Very few jobs are more demanding of patience and dedication. Most parents can't control their own children, but they expect teachers to do the impossible, underpaid professionals to spend hours, after hours, weekends. I doubt that there is very many jobs where people spend as much time after hours as the teaching profession. A teacher, as I think I said once before on this floor, gets so involved with maybe 30 kids in the classroom, many times has no time to go to the bathroom or eat her lunch. If anybody deserves early retirement, I think the people in the field of education do. I urge you to defeat this motion and support the bill.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Nelson, Senator Ashford on deck.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, this particular bill is very difficult for me. I had problems with it in Retirement Committee, some of the same problems that Senator Johnson alludes to, and Senator Wesely will allude to. I know that more and more retirement benefits simply makes a bigger and larger government. On the federal level, we find this with federal pensions, and so it goes on and on. Serving on the Retirement Committee, how many other groups come in and point to us? The State Patrol, the judges, and so on, you gave it to the teachers and now you must treat us likewise. On the other side of the coin, I know that teachers are burned out. Teaching is a hard profession and at some time ago, maybe not today, at a lower wage than they were justified to receive. As I mentioned earlier, I could not support the bill in Retirement Committee until the amendment was on there. I also had a